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## EDITORIAL NOTES

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At the present time a great wave of interest in industrial education is sweeping the country. Large cities are building manual-training high schools,

*AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOLS* commercial high schools, and industrial high schools. Trade schools and textile schools are even being built and maintained at public expense. The last type to be exploited is the agricultural high school. These schools are hailed by the masses because they appeal to utilitarian instincts—one of the most fundamental in the human race.

The people see in these schools a direct relation between going to school and getting a living. In order to secure the support of the masses schools must always recognize these fundamental relations. No school supported at public expense and created through the will of the people ever prospered without giving evidence of ministering in some way to the satisfaction of needs, either material or spiritual.

It is the purpose of these paragraphs, however, to call attention to one element which seems to be somewhat overlooked by many. It is an element which is full of hidden dangers and is inimical to the continuance of many of our present high schools. This is the danger:

If the new type of work means the establishment of a *separate* system of high schools, the existing high schools will be sapped of the means of their very existence. If separate schools are to be set up the people will gladly vote money to pay for the industrial training schools but will groan and complain and rebel if asked to tax themselves much beyond their present limits. At the present time there is abundant evidence that people will appropriate their money more freely for those subjects which seem to be nearer to everyday life and which promise relatively immediate pecuniary returns. The manual-training and domestic-science teachers, instructors in shorthand, bookkeeping, and commercial branches, and the athletic coach all receive higher salaries in our secondary schools than teachers of the regular branches. Teachers of the so-called more practical subjects are as a rule much less well trained, have a lower professional standard, are more itinerant, less devoted to their work, and less valuable to the school in the training for character than the other teachers. This is true because the subjects are so new and the fact that most teachers of these subjects regard their positions as makeshifts or stepping-stones to something else. It is often argued that competition determines salaries. But this is fallacious. Good teachers of history, mathematics, or German are just as scarce as good teachers of manual training or typewriting. The country is full of girls who can teach typewriting yet teachers of typewriting are offered far more than

teachers of Latin. The difference is due to the ways in which the subjects appeal to the people. Many a farmer will pay \$2,000 a year to an expert stockman but will vote to pay \$30 a month to the teacher of his boys and girls. Again, school boards will often purchase lavish equipment for the manual training, the commercial departments, and the trades, when they will not purchase the most meager library of books for history and literature.

If separate schools are organized in which to teach agriculture and the industrial subjects the conditions will be woefully exaggerated. The old general-culture schoolhouse will become weather-beaten and dilapidated and the new school buildings for the trades will rise up like palaces. A few months ago I visited in a city supporting the two types of school. The older type of school had at its head a man of national reputation, and who had a corps of coworkers of remarkable culture and power. In training students to the highest types of scholarship and character this school was renowned among the cultured class of the city. I started one morning to find this school and inquired my way of the working-people whom I met. I mentioned the man's name and the name of the school each time. After a rather long walk along the route pointed out by all my guides I found myself at the door—not of the school I sought, but the manual-training high school! That was the only high school the common people knew about. I had been within a block of the other, but nobody seemed aware of its existence. The contrast between the two buildings was enough to furnish a text for my comparison of equipment given above.

There is one other and more urgent reason why a separate class of high schools must not be allowed to spring up. Just as sure as they do they will breed social distinctions and cause stratifications in society. It has been our boast that children of all nationalities, occupations, and creeds enter our schoolroom doors and emerge together—American citizens. The American public school is the greatest factor in developing American citizenship that we possess, and its function in developing American citizenship is greater than teaching arithmetic, Latin, or trades. Social efficiency is much more needed just now than business efficiency. But, alas, too many are thinking only of business acumen.

Let us take a lesson from foreign countries. There the stratification of society is complete. A boy born in a lower station of life seldom gets out of that class—unless he migrates to America, where we have boasted that his only limitations are his brains and his own industry. Let us not recede from that boast. In European countries a separate class of schools is maintained for each stratum of society. The boy who goes to the common school can never expect to enter the university. Those who enter the trade schools and agricultural schools do so, not from interest in them but because those are the only doors open. Of course the schools there are a product of social conditions, but in turn the schools intensify and perpetuate the class distinctions.

If we wish to promote true democracy and avoid artificial distinctions we must see to it that we have only one class of public schools and that including every subject worthy of consideration and open on equal terms to every boy and girl in the community. The admission of girls to the public schools of Boston in 1789 on equal terms with the boys was an event of no less importance than the launching of our federal government in the same year. Those communities which still segregate the boys and girls in their public schools have not yet fully caught up with the full significance of the emancipation of women.

Manual training, domestic science, agriculture, and the trades must be represented in our schools, but not in separate schools. They must be by the side of the others and under the same roof. Pupils who wish those subjects must be given equal opportunities with those who wish Latin, history, or mathematics. On the other hand the boy who wishes Latin, history, or mathematics must not be discriminated against. The plan of United States Senator Davis to appropriate funds from the national government for the support of agricultural departments in our existing high schools is a good one. The only weak point in the scheme is that it contemplates supporting agriculture only.

The one who argues for the establishment of a separate system of agricultural high schools, or separate industrial high schools is wittingly or unwittingly an enemy to our present high schools and to true democracy.

FREDERICK E. BOLTON